

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, UR, PL, HU, YU (SMITH, DENNIS)

SUBJECT:PROPOSED VISIT OF STAG DENNIS SMITH

REF: MOSCOW 4948 (NOTAL)

1. DEPT IS PREPARED TO OFFER STAG GRANT TO DENNIS SMITH, AUTHOR OF BESTSELLER "REPORT FROM ENGINE CO. 82," FOR VISITS TO SOVIET UNION AND SELECTED EE COUNTRIES. SMITH COULD BE AVAILABLE IN JUNE FOR TWO TO THREE WEEKS FOR LECTURES/DISCUSSIONS WITH WRITERS, CRITICS AND STUDENTS.

2. SMITH IS PERSONABLE AND ARTICULATE SELF-MADE MAN, A GOOD EXAMPLE OF BLUE COLLAR WRITER WHOSE BOOK HAS ACHIEVED POPULAR SUCCESS AND CRITICAL ACCLAIM IN US AND ABROAD. BORN 1940 IN BROOKLYN, NEW YORK, HE WAS SCHOOL DROPOUT AT AGE 15, AND LATER ATTENDED NEW YORK UNIVERSITY IN

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EVENING WHILE WORKING AS STEAMFITTER AND CABDRIVER. HE

BECAME FULLTIME FIREMAN FOR NY CITY FIRE DEPT IN 1963, AND EARNED HIS BA AND MA IN ENGLISH AT NYU WHILE WORKING AS FIREFIGHTER. HIS "REPORT FROM ENGINE CO. 82," PUBLISHED 1972, BY SATURDAY REVIEW PRESS, WAS SELECTED BY BOOK-OF-THE-MONTH CLUB, WAS NATIONAL BESTSELLER IN US, UK AND SWEDEN, AND HAS BEEN TRANSLATED INTO DUTCH. SMITH IS CURRENTLY WRITING NOVEL TO BE PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 1975. HE IS MARRIED AND FATHER OF THREE SONS. HE WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR PROGRAMMING JUNE ONE TO TWENTY-THREE.

3. SMITH'S BOOK IS AN HONEST ACCOUNT OF A FIREMAN'S LIFE IN NEW YORK CITY AND GIVES AN UNVARNISHED VIEW OF THE DEPRIVATION HE OBSERVES IN THE TENEMENT DISTRICTS OF NEW YORK CITY AS HE TAKES THE READER ALONG IN RESPONDING TO FIRE ALARMS. SMITH IS GOOD EXAMPLE OF HOW A BLUE COLLAR WORKER IN US CAN TAKE ADVANTAGES OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION AND BECOME AUTHOR OF BESTSELLER WHICH HAS CAUGHT THE PUBLIC'S ATTENTION WITH ITS MESSAGE AND POPULAR APPEAL. FOR MOSCOW: WE NOTE THAT CPSU CC AND POLITBURO MEMBER GRISHIN, AT PARTY MEETING OF MOSCOW WRITERS UNION MARCH 14, CALLED FOR THE CREATION OF WORKS DEALING WITH THE WORKING CLASS. ALSO, PLEASE NOTE THAT ARTICLE ON SMITH (WITH PHOTO) APPEARED IN FEBRUARY 1974 ISSUE OF RUSSIAN EDITION OF AMERICA ILLUSTRATED. SMITH ALSO INTERESTED IN MEETING WITH LOCAL FIREFIGHTERS IN ALL COUNTRIES WHERE POSSIBLE.

4. COPIES OF "REPORT FROM ENGINE CO. 82" WILL BE POUCHED BY USIA/ICS UPON RECEIPT OF POSTS' ID NUMBERS. COPIES OF REVIEWS POUCHED APRIL 14. KISSINGER

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